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Curios and Relics

Campaign & Patriotic Materials

Wide Awakes Torches

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

80.
Kennebunk, Me.,
April 25, 1934.

Dear Mr. Warren,
I have a lantern which was
carried on a pole in the Lincoln
campaign of 1860. size 7 in. high,
and square. 5 in. wide on each
side which has four sides. has a
colored picture of Washington on
horse back with soldiers. Was
carried in 1860 campaign by
William A. Little, Newburyport,
Mass. in good condition.

Price 25.00.

I also have found recently a
National Democratic chart
for the Presidential campaign 1860.

2

size 36 X 29 gives portraits
of Stephen A. Douglas and
Herchel V. Johnson candidates
Shows portraits of 15 other presidents
Many speeches by Douglas and others.
Also map of the United States.
Flags, eagle, battle scenes, all
in fine colors. The chart is
in fine condition. Price 15.00

Yours truly

Ed Rouleau,
7 Water St.
Kennebunk
Me

Panther Curio

May 2, 1934

Mr. Fred Rouleau
7 Water Street
Kennebunk, Maine

My dear Mr. Rouleau:

Thank you for calling to our attention the two very interesting items which you have but neither one of them seems to be in our plan of collecting. We are not especially interested in curios and we do not collect Douglas material, so I feel we shall have to reject both of your offers.

Very sincerely yours,

LAW:LM

Director

C. W. LYON, INC.

20 EAST 56TH STREET

NEW YORK

TELEPHONE ELDORADO 5-3951

Antiques

Objects of Art

Dec. 27, 1937.

Mr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Sir:-

We find the history of the lanternis that it was purchased from Mr. William Thompson who is the Surrogate of Morris County, New Jersey, a very old gentleman who said it was carried in the Inaugural Parade in Morristown, N. J. 1865. It is the regular accordian type of round paper lantern for candle, striped up and down alternately red and white with head of Lincoln in white on blue over which is 1865 and below Lincoln, stars on side of medalion. On other side is head of Washington and over it 1776, underneath Washington and on sides stars. On sides between busts is "Union" and "Freedom".

It is just one of those items that struck us as being rare and in its perfect condition made is wonder how it has been preserved. We ask \$57.00 for it, based only on the cost to us. If you wish we will be pleased to send it on for your approval.

We have a covered custard pot, also an 8" plate, both from Lincoln White House set, given by Lincoln to Governor Caleb Lyon of Missouri, one of America's first collectors of ceramics, who had a collection of Mary Lincoln items, as he was his personal friend. Both pieces are perfect. If interested will let you know particulars.

Very truly yours,

C. W. LYON INC.

C. W. Lyon EH.

CWL:EH

December 30, 1937

Mr. C. W. Lyon
20 E. 56th St.
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Lyon:

I thank you for the complete description of the lantern which you have in your possession. I am very sure we would not care to acquire it. In fact, we have very little of this material, specializing more fully in literature and manuscripts relating to Abraham Lincoln.

Very truly yours,

LAW:BS
L.A. Warren

Director

ESTABLISHED 1921
MARTHA JANE REED

BRANCH SHOP ON
ROUTE 20
5 MILES EAST OF
SKANEATELES, N. Y.

MARTHA JANE'S
ANTIQUES AND CANDY
MARCELLUS, NEW YORK

November 20, 1939

Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne,
Indiana

Dear Mr. Warren:-

Thank you for your letter and
check of \$2.00 enclosed for the
Lincoln plaque, which we are send-
ing to you by express, collect.

We will be glad to make a special
note of the things you are interested,
and when we find items of interest in
relation to Lincoln, we will be glad
to write you about them.

We are enclosing a sketch of a
tin lamp we bought in Syracuse, New
York, recently. It has a label, 'Used
in a Lincoln Parade'. Would this in-
terest you?

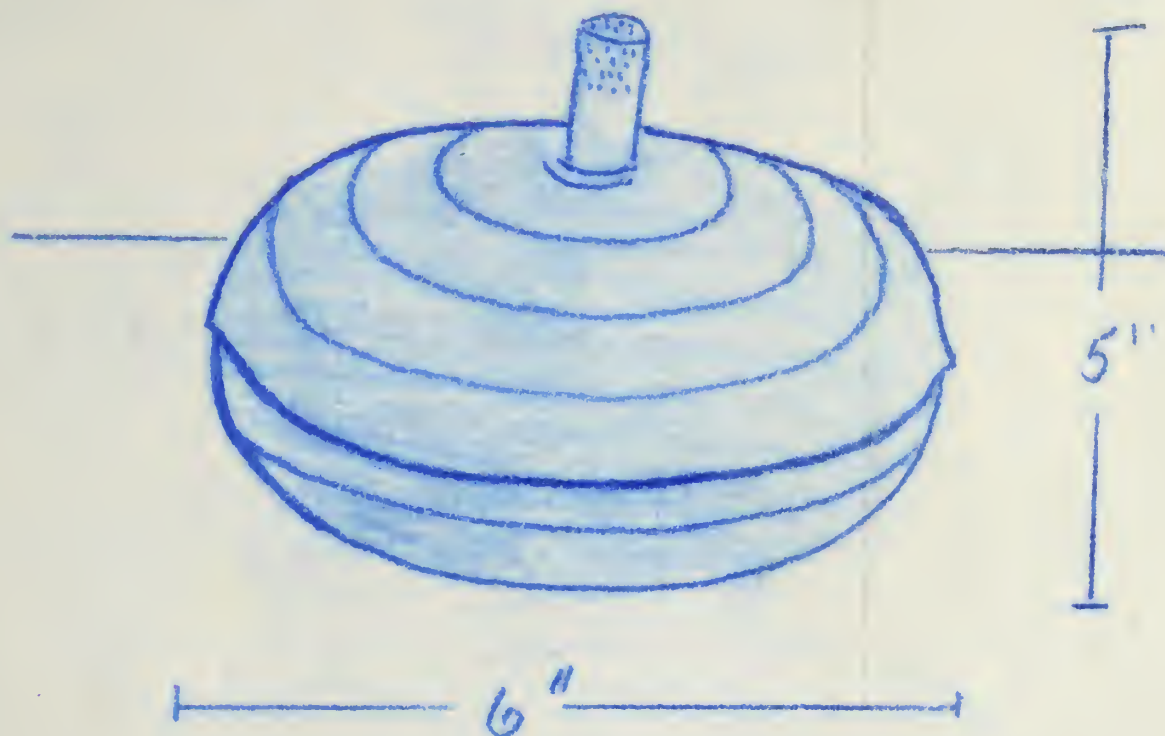
GA
Enc.

Very truly yours,

MARTHA JANE'S

Martha Jane Reed
G.A.

81-49 MAY 1



Old Tin lantern - is marked as used
by in a parade for Lincoln -

2.50

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 02-15-01 BY 10438

CAMP - Torch light

November 22, 1939

Martha Jane Reed
Martha Jane's Antiques and Candy
Marcellus, New York

Dear Madam:

Thank you for calling our attention to the curio,
a lamp used in the Lincoln Parade, but we have not as yet
attempted to gather curios which do not have a definite
attachment to Lincoln himself.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

-9-

Dear Sirs

I have for sale a punched
tin lantern used
during Lincoln's campaign
save Union 1863 on.
large letters. its a 2
candle light. & is in
perfect condition —
my price is 50⁰⁰
will you please return
the photos. & if interested.

- Sincerely
Mrs Louise McDonald
moorepark
mich

LANTERN

July 9, 1943

Mrs. Louise MacDonald
Moorepark, Michigan

Dear Madam:

Thank you very much for sending information about
the Lincoln campaign light but we have not been interested
in acquiring curios of this type.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Difector

law gave him special privileges in relation to an extended period of service, a law entitling Worden to fifty-five years of active service. However, he retired with the highest sea-pay of his grade, at his own request, on December 23, 1886.

Worden was a brave and competent officer, but not necessarily a brilliant one. Lady Luck (or President Lincoln) seemed to have been with him in the way of special assignments and promotions. Perhaps his assignment of the command of the *Monitor* came to him because the older officers of the Navy had no desire to command the "cheese box on a raft" or "a tin can on a shingle" which started the forty-four year old lieutenant on the road to fame. Little did old "wooden wall" officers realize that a reputation could be built on the half-submerged deck of that "absurd monstrosity" of John Ericsson's.

The Wide Awakes And Their Torch Light Parades

To promote the Presidential candidacy of Abraham Lincoln during the political campaign of 1860 there were developed marching organizations called the Wide Awakes. The members marched at night carrying flaming torches, colored lanterns, banners, flags and transparencies much the same way as floats are used today. Such parades served as entertainment in the communities, large or small, when other types of diversion were unknown. Along the route of the parade streamers were hung across the streets and the buildings, and everyone and everything was gayly decorated. These celebrations, held largely in the North, did much to advertise the candidate, in addition to entertaining the spectator.

The first Wide Awake Club was organized in Hartford, Connecticut on Saturday, March 3, 1860 when a group of thirty-six young men met in a club room over Buck's Drug Store on Main Street, one door north of the Phoenix Bank. They adopted a Constitution, and each member was to provide at his own expense "a glazed cap and cape," and to pay a fee of seventy-five cents which would allow him the use of a campaign torch. J. Doyle De Witt, in his 15 page pamphlet "Lincoln In Hartford" has provided a detailed account of the origin and purpose of the Wide Awakes.

The first officers of the Hartford Wide Awakes were James S. Chalker, Captain; H. T. Sperry, 1st Aid and Corresponding Secretary; and C. V. R. Pond, Recording Secretary and Captain's Aid. The objective of the newly formed organization proved popular and within a few weeks the membership was increased to "several hundred" and on July 27, over "two thousand" Wide Awakes from Hartford and from other cities, some as far away as Newark, marched in the streets of Hartford in a torchlight parade. Meanwhile, Republican organizations all over the country adopted the name "Wide Awakes" and a potent political force was created almost spontaneously.

The campaign torches burned a coal-oil or low grade kerosene, and as they continually dripped when in use, the marchers wore oil cloth capes to protect their clothing. These capes also served as rain capes during inclement weather. At first these capes were nondescript, but eventually they became colorful uniforms. Then, too, enterprising manufacturers made available to the marchers many types of torches with varying descriptions in newspaper advertisement of the merits of their products. However, many of the torches were home-made.

At times, some of the groups taking part in the torchlight processions were hired marchers who were paid as much as \$2.00 per person for one parade, and they were not necessarily loyal to any political party. Other paraders were sometimes highly trained and could execute a manual of arms with their rifle torches, similar to military marching groups. These parades would often last two or three hours. The custom of using torchlight groups in political parades prevailed until the late 19th century.

In the 1860 campaign, the marchers did more than march; they sang campaign songs and shouted political slogans. A popular number often sung during a parade was the "Wide Awake Rallying Song":

Wide Awake Rallying Song

Tune—"Nelly Bly."

Wide awake! wide awake! this is no time for sleep,
Let every friend of Freedom his weary vigil keep;
The foe is on his march again, his council fires aglow,
Then rally now, my gallant boys, to battle with the foe.

Chorus—Wide awake! wide awake!

Let us our torches take,
And show the foes of Freedom, boys,
That we are wide awake.

Wide awake! wide awake! there's no such word as fail,
The omens of our triumph, boys, are borne on every gale;
From East to West, through all the land where Freedom
yet holds sway,

The shouts of Freedom's conquering hosts still cheer us
on our way.

Chorus—Wide awake! wide awake! etc.

Wide awake! wide awake! the foe is on his way,
There is no time for slumber, if we would win the day;
Our cause is just, our hearts are firm, and fixed on truth
and right,

If we keep wide awake, boys, we'll put our foes to flight.

Chorus—Wide awake! wide awake! etc.

Wide awake! wide awake! the stars with loving light
Look down upon our gallant band who battle for the right;
We bear no weapons in our hands, our motto's "Love to
man,"

And Freedom, peace, and happiness, still follow in our
van.

Chorus—Wide awake! wide awake! etc.

A "Grand Procession of Wide Awakes" at New York



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

This eagle torch (recently acquired by the Lincoln Library-Museum) is believed to have been used in the 1860 Presidential campaign by the Republican Wide Awakes. The torch burned a low grade of coal oil and was supported on a pole by loops under each wing, with wick openings on top of each wing. The wick openings on this torch have been converted from single burners to double burners. Examples of this type of torch are found in the Detroit Historical Society and in the J. Doyle DeWitt Collection of Hartford, Conn. See Political Campaign Torches by Herbert R. Collins, Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Obverse and reverse of bronze medal commemorating the organization of the Hartford Wide Awakes on March 3, 1860.

City on the evening of October 3, 1860 was reported in *Harper's Weekly* on October 13th:

"Thousands (estimated at 20,000) of torches flashing in high, narrow streets, crowded with eager people, and upon house-fronts in which every window swarms with human faces; with the mingling music of scores of military bands, and the rippling, running, sweeping, and surging sound of huzzas from tens of thousands, but generally a silence like the quiet flow of a vast river; with the waving of banners and moving transparencies of endless device; and through all, out of all, and over all, the splendor of exploding fire-works, of every color—these combined, at night, are an imposing spectacle; and these everyone in the city saw at the Wide-Awake festival on Wednesday night.

"It was certainly the nearest approach to a purely

poetic popular demonstration that we have had. Torches have no dangerous antecedents. Fireworks are of no party. Splendor and beauty are not yet prescribed. Every man who has at heart the municipal honor or New York (municipal honor?) must have been glad and gratified on Wednesday evening. There was never, perhaps, so immense a political fete which passed off more peacefully. Even the bitterest political opponents of the party to which the organization belongs could not but confess how beautiful the scene was.

"Standing at midnight in Broadway, near the corner of Tenth Street, and looking up toward Union Place, you saw the entire street sheeted with flickering light, and Union Place bright with showers of fireworks; while down town, as far as the New York Hotel, and beyond, there was the same blazing torrent of life and enthusiasm, from which, in profuse and incessant explosion, burst the Roman candles of every celestial hue."

Herbert R. Collins, in his 44 page pamphlet *Political Campaign Torches*, Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (1964) has identified nine different tin torches used in the 1860 Presidential campaign, and three different tin lanterns used in 1864. Four of the 1860 torches were mounted on swivels while three of the four featured a ring to form a revolving and oscillating frame. One of the torches identified by Collins bears the slogan "Hurrah for Lincoln." The remaining torches are designated as "rifle," "platform," "eagle" and "fireman's." The torches with the exception of the one designated "rifle" were, of course, attached to long poles.

Very few of the campaign torches that appear in museums and collections today are marked with any type of identification, and only a very few were patented. With the hundreds of thousands of torches used in the many political campaigns it is surprising that so few have survived.



Grand procession of Wide Awakes at New York City on the evening of October 3, 1860 from *Harper's Weekly*, October 13, 1860. As this is a drawing, the artist depicted all of the torches to be alike. A photograph of the same scene would likely have revealed many different types of torches. This drawing was made when the Wide Awakes marched along News paper Row as the Tribune and Times buildings are depicted along with the City Hall Park at the right of the picture.



A WIDE-AWAKE TORCH CARRIED IN THE
FIRST LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN



